

THE MORMON QUESTION.

BEING A

SPEECH OF VICE-PRESIDENT SCHUYLER COLFAX,

AT SALT LAKE CITY.

A REPLY THERETO BY

ELDER JOHN TAYLOR;

AND A

LETTER OF VICE-PRESIDENT COLFAX

PUBLISHED IN THE "NEW YORK INDEPENDENT,"

WITH

ELDER TAYLOR'S REPLY.

PRINTED AT DESERET NEWS OFFICE, SALT LAKE CITY, 1870.

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SPEECH

OF

VICE-PRESIDENT SCHUYLER COLFAX,

DELIVERED ON THE PORTICO OF THE TOWNSEND HOUSE, SALT LAKE CITY,
OCTOBER 5, 1869.

FELLOW CITIZENS:—I come hither in response to your call to thank the band from Camp Douglas for the serenade with which they have honored me, and to tender my obligations to the thousands before me, for having come from their homes and places of business "to speed the parting guest."

As I stand before you, to-night, my thoughts go back to the first view I ever had of Salt Lake City, four years ago last June. After traveling with my companions, Gov. Bross and Mr. Bowles, who are with me again, and Mr. Richardson, whose absence we have all regretted, over arid plains, and alkali valleys, and barren mountains, day after day, our stage coach emerged from a canon one morning, and we looked down upon your city, covering miles in its area, with its gardens, green with fruit trees and shrubbery, and the Jordan, flashing in the sun beyond. And when, after stopping at Camp Douglas, which overlooks your city, to salute the flag of our country, and honor the officers and soldiers who keep watch and ward over it at this distant post, we drove down with your common council to the city, and saw its wide streets, and the streams which irrigate your gardens, rippling down all of them in their pebbly beds, I felt indeed that you had a right to regard it as a Palmyra in the desert. Returning now, with my family and friends, from a long journey on the Pacific coast, extending north to where the Columbia river tears its way through the mighty range which bars the way for all other rivers from the British to the Mexican line, we came to your city by the stage route from the railroad, through the fertile region that lines your lake shore, and find it as beautiful and attractive in its affluence of fruits and flowers as when we first visited it.

I am gratified too, that our present visit occurred at the same time with your Terri-

torial Fair, enabling us to witness your advance in the various branches of industry. I was specially interested in the hours I spent there, yesterday, with some of your leading citizens, in your cotton manufactures from the cotton you raise in southern Utah, your woolen manufactures, the silk manufacture you have recently inaugurated, your leather and harness, the porcelain, which was new to me, your furniture, your paintings, and pictures, the fancy work of the ladies, and the fruits and vegetables which tell their own story of the fertility of your soil. I rejoice over every indication of progress and self-reliance in all parts of the Union, and hope you may realize, by further development, how wise and beneficial such advancement is to communities like yours, remote from the more thickly settled portions of the Republic.

I have enjoyed the opportunity, also, of visiting your Tabernacle, erected since I was here before, the largest building in which religious services are held on the continent, and of listening to your organ, constructed here, which, in its mammoth size, its volume of sound, and sweetness of tone, would compare favorably with any in the largest cities in the Union. Nor did I feel any the less interest on my present, than on my former visit, in listening to your leading men in their places of worship, as they expounded and defended their faith and practice, because that faith and practice differed so widely from my own. Believing in free speech, as all of us should, I listened attentively, respectfully, and courteously, to what failed to convince my mind, and you will doubtless hear me with equal patience, while I tell you frankly wherein we differ.

But first let me say that I have no strictures to utter as to your creed on any really religious question. Our land is a land of

civil and religious liberty, and the faith of every man is a matter between himself and God alone. You have as much right to worship the Creator through a president and twelve apostles of your church organization as I have through the ministers and elders and creed of mine. And this right I would defend for you with as much zeal as the right of every other denomination throughout the land. But our country is governed by law, and no assumed revelation justifies any one in trampling on the law. If it did, every wrong-doer would use that argument to protect himself in his disobedience to it. The Constitution declares, in the most emphatic language, that that instrument and the laws made in conformity thereto, shall be the supreme law of the land. Whether liked or disliked, they bind the forty millions of people who are subject to that supreme law. If any one condemns them as unconstitutional, the courts of the United States are open, before which they can test the question. But, till they are decided to be in conflict with the Constitution, they are binding upon you in Utah as they are on me in the District of Columbia, or on the citizens of Idaho and Montana. Let me refer now to the law of 1862 against which you especially complain, and which you denounce Congress for enacting. It is obeyed in the other Territories of the United States, or if disobeyed its violation is punished. It is not obeyed here, and though you often speak of the persecutions to which you were subject in the earlier years of your church, you cannot but acknowledge that the conduct of the government and the people of the United States towards you, in your later years, has been one of toleration, which you could not have realized in any other of the civilized nations of the world.

I do not concede that the institution you have established here, and which is condemned by the law, is a question of religion. But to you who do claim it as such, I reply, that the law you denounce, only re-enacts the original prohibitions of your own Book of Mormon, on its 118th page,* and your Book of Doctrines and Covenants, in its chapter on marriage; and these are the inspired records, as you claim them, on which your church was organized.

The Book of Mormon, on the same page, speaks twice of the conduct of David and Solomon, as "a grosser crime," and those who follow their practice as "waxing in iniquity." The Book of Doctrines and Covenants is the discipline and creed of your church; and in its chapter on marriage, it declares, that as the Mormon church has been charged with the crimes of fornication

*The Book of Mormon denounces David and Solomon for having "many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord." "Wherefore I, the Lord God, will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old. Wherefore, my brethren, hear me and hearken to the word of the Lord; for there shall not any man among you have save but one wife, and concubines he shall have none, for I, the Lord, delighteth in the chastity of women."

and polygamy, it is avowed as the law of the church, that a man shall have but one wife, and a woman but one husband, till death shall part them.

I know you claim that a subsequent revelation annulled all this; but I use these citations to show you that the Congressional law, which you denounce, "only enacted what was the original and publicly proclaimed and printed creed on which your church was founded. And yet, while you assume that this later revelation gives you the right to turn your back on your old faith and disobey the law, you would not yourselves tolerate others in assuming rights for themselves under revelations they might claim to have received, or under religions they might profess. The Hindoos claim, as part of their religion, the right to burn widows with the dead bodies of their husbands. If they were to attempt it here, as their religion, you would prevent it by force. If a new revelation were to be proclaimed here, that the strong men should have the right to take the wives of the weaker men, that the learned men should take the wives of the unlearned, that the rich men should take the wives of the poor, that those who were powerful and influential should have the right to command the labor and the service of the humbler, as their bond-slaves, you would spurn it, and would rely upon the law and the power of the United States to protect you.

But you argue that it is a restraint on individual freedom; and that it concerns only yourselves. Yet you justify these restraints on individual freedom in everything else. Let me prove this to you. If a man came here and sought to establish a liquor saloon on Temple street without license, you would justify your common council, which is your municipal congress, in suppressing it by force, and punishing the offender besides. Another one comes here and says that he will pursue his legitimate avocation of bone-boiling on a lot in the heart of your city. You would expect your council to prevent it, and why? Because you believe it would be offensive to society and to the people around him. And still another says, that as an American citizen he will establish a powder mill on a lot he has purchased, next door to this hotel, where we have been so hospitably entertained. You would demand that this should be prevented, because it was obnoxious to the best interests of the community. I might use other illustrations as to personal conduct which you would insist should be restrained, although it fettered personal freedom, and the wrong-doer might say only concerned himself. But I have adduced sufficient to justify Congress in an enactment they deemed wise for the whole people for whom they legislated. And I need not go further to adduce other arguments as to the elevation of woman; for my purpose has been in these remarks, to indicate the right of Congress to pass the law and to insist on obedience to it.

One thing I must allude to, personal to

myself. The papers have published a discourse delivered last April by your highest ecclesiastical authority, which stated that the President and Vice President of the United States were both gamblers and drunkards. (Voices in the crowd, "He did not say so.") I had not heard before that it was denied; but I am glad to hear the denial now. Whether denied or not, however, I did not intend to answer railing with railing, nor personal attack with invective. I only wished to state publicly in this city, where the charge is said to have been made, that it was utterly untrue as to President Grant; and as to myself, that I never gambled to the value of a farthing, and have been a total abstinence man all the years of my manhood. However I may differ on political questions or others from any portion of my countrymen, no one has ever truthfully assailed my character. I have valued a good character far more than a political reputation or official honors, and wish to preserve it unspotted while life shall last.

A few words more and I must conclude. When our party visited you four years ago, we all believed that, under wise counsels, your city might become the great city of

the interior. But you must allow me to say that you do not seem to have improved these opportunities as you might have done. What you should do to develop the advantages your position gives you, seems obvious. You should encourage, and not discourage, competition in trade. You should welcome, and not repel, investments from abroad. You should discourage every effort to drive capital from your midst. You should rejoice at the opening of every new store, or factory, or mechanic shop, by whomsoever conducted. You should seek to widen the area of country dependent on your city for supplies. You should realize that wealth will come to you only by development, by unfettered competition, by increased capital.

Here I must close. I have spoken to you, face to face, frankly, truthfully, fearlessly. I have said nothing but for your own good. Let me counsel you once more to obedience to the law, and thanking you for the patient hearing you have given me, and for the hospitalities our party have received, both from Mormon and Gentile citizens, I bid you all good night and good bye.



ELDER TAYLOR'S REPLY TO VICE-PRESIDENT COLFAX'S SPEECH.

AMERICAN HOUSE, BOSTON, MASS.,
October 20, 1869.

To the Editor of the *Deseret News*.—Dear Sir,—I have read with a great deal of interest the speech of the Hon. Schuyler Colfax, delivered in Salt Lake City, Oct. 5, containing strictures on our institutions, as reported in the *Springfield Republican*, wherein there is an apparent frankness and sincerity manifested. It is pleasant, always, to listen to sentiments, that are bold, unaffected and outspoken; and however my views may differ—as they most assuredly do—from those of the Hon. Vice-President of the United States, I cannot but admire the candor and courtesy manifested in the discussion of this subject; which, though to him perplexing and difficult, is to us an important part of our religious faith.

I would not however, here be misunderstood; I do not regard the speech of Mr. Colfax as something indifferent or meaningless. I consider that words proceeding from a gentleman occupying the honorable position of Mr. Colfax, have their due weight. His remarks, while they were courteous and polite, were evidently calmly weighed and cautiously uttered, and they carry with them a significance, which I, as a believer in "Mormonism," am bound to notice; and I hope with that honesty and candor which characterize the remarks of this honorable gentleman.

Mr. Colfax remarks:

"I have no strictures to offer as to your creeds on any really religious question. Our land is a land of civil and religious liberty, and the faith of every man is a matter between himself and God alone; you have as much right to worship the Creator, through a President and Twelve Apostles of your Church organization, as I have through the Ministers and Elders and creed of mine; and this right I would defend for you with as much zeal as the right of every other denomination throughout the land."

This certainly is magnanimous and even-handed justice, and the sentiments do honor to their author; they are sentiments that ought to be engraven on the heart of every American citizen.

He continues:

"But our country is governed by law and no assumed revelation justifies any one in trampling on the law."

At first sight this reasoning is very plau-

sible, and I have no doubt that Mr. Colfax was just as sincere and patriotic in the utterance of the latter as the former sentences; but with all due deference permit me to examine these words and their import.

That our country is governed by law we all admit; but when it is said that "no assumed revelation justifies any one in trampling on the law," I should respectfully ask, What! not if it interferes with my religious faith, which you state "is a matter between God and myself alone?" Allow me, sir, here to state that the assumed revelation referred to is one of the most vital parts of our religious faith; it emanated from God and cannot be legislated away; it is part of the "Everlasting Covenant" which God has given to man. Our marriages are solemnized by proper authority; a woman is sealed unto a man for time and for eternity, by the power of which Jesus speaks, which "seals on earth and it is sealed in heaven." With us it is "Celestial Marriage;" take this from us and you rob us of our hopes and associations in the re-urrection of the just. This not our religion? You do not see things as we do. You marry for time only, "until death does you part." We have eternal covenants, eternal unions, eternal associations. I cannot, in an article like this, enter into details, which I should be pleased on a proper occasion to do. I make these remarks to show that it is considered, by us, a part of our religious faith, which I have no doubt did you understand it as we do, you would defend, as you state, "with as much zeal as the right of every other denomination throughout the land." Permit me here to say, however, that it was the revelation (I will not say assumed) that Joseph and Mary had, which made them look upon Jesus as the Messiah; which made them flee from the wrath of Herod, who was seeking the young child's life. This they did in contravention of law, which was his decree. Did they do wrong in protecting Jesus from the law? But Herod was a tyrant. That makes no difference; it was the law of the land, and I have yet to learn the difference between a tyrannical king and a tyrannical Congress. When we talk of executing law in either case, that means force,—force means an army, and an army means death. Now I am not sufficiently versed in metaphysics to discover the difference in its effects, between the asp of

Cleopatra, the dagger of Brutus, the chalice of Lucretia Borgia, or the bullet or sabre of an American soldier.

I have, sir, written the above in consequence of some remarks which follow:

"I do not concede that the institution you have established here, and which is condemned by the law, is a question of religion."

Now, with all due deference, I do think that if Mr. Colfax had carefully examined our religious faith he would have arrived at other conclusions. In the absence of this I might ask, who constituted Mr. Colfax a judge of my religious faith? I think he has stated that "The faith of every man is a matter between himself and God alone."

Mr. Colfax has a perfect right to state and feel that he does not believe in the revelation on which my religious faith is based, nor in my faith at all; but has he the right to dictate my religious faith? I think not; he does not consider it religion, but is nevertheless mine.

If a revelation from God is not a religion, what is.

His not believing it from God makes no difference; I know it is. The Jews did not believe in Jesus but Mr. Colfax and I do; their unbelief did not alter the revelation.

Marriage has from time immemorial, among civilized nations, been considered a religious ordinance. It was so considered by the Jews. It is looked upon, by the Catholic clergy, as one of their sacraments. It is so treated by the Greek Church. The ministers of the Episcopal Church say, in their marriage formula, "What God has joined together, let not man put asunder;" and in some of the Protestant churches their members are disfellowshipped for marrying what are termed unbelievers. So I am in hopes, one of these times, should occasion require it, to call upon our friend, Mr. Colfax, to redeem his pledge,

"To defend for us our religious faith, with as much zeal as the right of every other denomination throughout the land."

I again quote:

"But to you who do claim it as such, I reply that the law you denounce only re-enacts the original prohibition of your own Book of Mormon, on its 118th page, and your Book of Doctrine and Covenants, in its chapter on marriage."

In regard to the latter of these I would state that it was only considered a portion of the discipline of our Church, and was never looked upon as a revelation. It was published in the appendix to the Book of Doctrine and Covenants long before the revelation concerning Celestial Marriage was given. That, of course, superseded the former. The quotation from the Book of Mormon, given by Mr. Colfax, is only partly quoted. I cannot blame the gentleman for this: he has many engagements, without examining our doctrines. I suppose this was handed to him. Had he read a little further he would have found it stated:

"For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts,

raise up seed unto me I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things."

In answer to this I say the Lord has commanded and we obey the command.

I again quote:

"And yet while you assume that this later revelation gives you the right to turn your back on your old faith and to disobey the law, you would not yourselves tolerate others in assuming rights for themselves under revelations they might claim to have received, or under religions they might profess."

Mr. Colfax is misinformed here. All religions are tolerated by us, and all revelations or assumed revelations. We take the liberty of disbelieving some of them; but none are interfered with. And in relation to turning our back on our old religion we have never done it.

Concerning our permitting the Hindoos to burn their widows, it is difficult to say what we should do. The British government has tolerated both polygamy and the burning of Hindoo widows in India. If the Hindoos were converted to our religion they would not burn their widows; they are not likely to come to Utah without. Whose rights here have we interfered with? Whose property have we taken? Whose religious or political faith or rights have been curtailed by us? None. We have neither interfered with Missouri nor Illinois; with Kansas, Nebraska, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, California, nor any other State or Territory. I wish we could say the same of others. I hope we shall not be condemned for crimes we are expected to commit. It will be time enough to atone for them when done. We do acknowledge having lately started co-operative stores. Is this anything new in England, Germany, France or the United States? We think we have a right, as well as others, to buy or sell of and to whom we please. We do not interrupt others in selling, if they can get customers. We have commenced to deal with our friends. We do acknowledge that we are rigid in the enforcement of law against theft, gambling, debauchery and other civilized vices. Is this a crime? If so we plead guilty.

But permit me here to return to the religious part of our investigations; for if our doctrines are religious, then it is confessed that Congress has no jurisdiction in this case and the argument is at an end. Mr. Webster defines religion as "*any system of faith and worship*, as the religion of the Turks, of Hindoos, of Christians." I have never been able to look at religion in any other light. I do not think that Mr. Colfax had carefully digested the subject when he said

"I do not concede that the institution you have established here, and which is condemned by law, is a question of religion."

Are we to understand by this that Mr. Colfax is created an umpire to decide upon what is religion and what is not, upon

what is true religion and what is false? If so, by whom and what authority is he created judge? I am sure he has not reflected upon the bearing of this hypothesis, or he would not have made such an utterance.

According to this theory no persons ever were persecuted for their religion, there never was such a thing known. Could anybody suppose that that erudite, venerable, and profoundly learned body of men,—the great Sanhedrim of the Jews; or that those holy men, the chief priests, scribes and pharisees, would persecute any body for religion? Jesus was put to death,—not for his religion,—but because he was a blasphemer: because he had a devil and cast out devils, through Beelzebub the prince of devils; because he, being a carpenter's son, and known among them as such, declared himself the Son of God. So they said, and they were the then judges. Could anybody be more horrified than those Jews at such pretensions? His disciples were persecuted, proscribed and put to death, not for their religion, but because they "were pestilent fellows and stirrers up of sedition," and because they believed in an "assumed revelation" concerning "one Jesus, who was put to death, and who, they said, had risen again." It was for false pretensions and a lack of religion that they were persecuted. Their religion was not like that of the Jews; ours, not like that of Mr. Colfax.

Loyola did not invent and put into use the faggot, the flame, the sword, the thumb-screws, the rack and gibbet to persecute anybody, it was to purify the Church of heretics, as others would purify Utah. His zeal was for the Holy Mother Church. The Nonconformists of England and Holland, the Huguenots of France and the Scottish non-Covenanters were not persecuted or put to death for their religion; it was for being schismatics, turbulent and unbelievers. Talk of religion, what horrid things have not been perpetrated in its name! All of the above claimed that they were persecuted for their religion. All of the persecutors, as Mr. Colfax said about us, did "not concede that the institution they had established which was condemned by the law, was religion;" or, in other terms, it was an imposture or false religion. What of the Quakers and Baptists of New England?

You say we complain of persecution. Have we not cause to do it? Can we call our treatment by a milder term? Was it benevolence that robbed, pillaged and drove thousands of men, women and children from Missouri? Was it Christian philanthropy that, after robbing, plundering, and ravaging a whole community drove them from Illinois, into the wilderness among savages?

When we fled as outcasts and exiles from the United States we went to Mexican Territory. If not protected we should have been at least unmolested there. Do you think, in your treaty with Mexico, it was a very merciful providence that placed us

again under your paternal guardianship? Did you know that you called upon us in our exodus from Illinois for 500 men, which were furnished while fleeing from persecution, to help you to possess that country; for which your tender mercies were exhibited, by letting loose an army upon us, and you spent about forty millions of dollars to accomplish our ruin? Of course we did not suffer; "religious fanatics" cannot feel like the eels the fishwoman was skinning, "we have got used to it." Upon what pretext was this done? Upon the false fabrications of your own officers, and which your own Governor Cummings, afterwards published as false. Thus the whole of this infamous proceeding was predicated upon falsehood, originating with your own officers and afterwards exposed by them. Did Government make any amends, or has it ever done it? Is it wrong to call this persecution? We have learned to our cost "that the king can do no wrong." Excuse me, sir, if I speak warmly. This people have labored under accumulated wrongs for upwards of thirty years past, still unacknowledged and unredressed. I have said nothing in the above but what I am prepared to prove. What is all this for? Polygamy? No: that is not even pretended.

Having said so much with regard to Mr. Colfax's speech, let me now address a few words to Congress and to the nation. I hope they will not object for I too am a teacher. And first let me inquire into the law itself, enacted in 1862. The revelation on polygamy was given in 1843, nineteen years before the passage of the Congressional act. We, as a people, believe that revelation is true and came from God. This is our religious belief; and right or wrong it is still our belief; whatever opinions others may entertain, it makes no difference to our religious faith. The Constitution is to protect me in my religious faith, and other persons in theirs as I understand it. It does not prescribe a faith for me, or any one else, or authorize others to do it, not even Congress. It simply protects us all in our religious faiths. This is one of the Constitutional rights reserved by the people. Now who does not know that the law of 1862 in relation to polygamy was passed on purpose to interfere with our religious faith? This was as plainly and distinctly its object as the proclamation of Herod to kill the young children under two years old, was meant to destroy Jesus; or the law passed by Pharaoh, in regard to the destruction of the Hebrew children, was meant to destroy the Israelites. If a law had been passed making it a penal offense for communities, or churches, to forbid marriage, who would not have understood that it referred to the Shaking Quakers, and to the Pories, Nunneries and Priesthood of the Catholic Church? This law, in its inception, progress and passage, was intended to bring us into collision with the United States, that a pretext might be found for our ruin. These are facts that no honest man will controvert

It could not have been more plain, although more honest, if it had said the "Mormons" shall have no more wives than one. It was a direct attack upon our religious faith. It is the old story of the lamb drinking below the wolf, and being accused by it of fouling the waters above. The big bully of a boy putting a chip on his shoulders, and daring the little urchin to knock it off.

But we are graciously told that we have our appeal. True, we have an appeal. So had the Hebrew mothers to Pharaoh; so had Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar; so had Jesus to Herod; so had Cæsar to Brutus; so had those sufferers on the rack to Loyola; so had the Waldenses and Albigenses to the Pope; so had the Quakers and Baptists of New England to the Puritans. Why did they not do it? Please answer.

Do statesmen and politicians realize what they are doing when they pass such laws? Do they know, as before stated, that resistance to law means force, that force means an army, and that an army means death? They may yet find something more pleasant to reflect upon than to have been the aiders and abettors of murder, to be stained with the blood of innocence, and they may try in vain to cleanse their hands of the accursed spot.

It is not the first time that Presidents, Kings, Congresses and statesmen have tried to regulate the acts of Jehovah. Pharaoh's exterminating order about the Hebrew infants was one of acknowledged policy. They grew, they increased too fast. Perhaps the Egyptians had learned, as well as some of our Eastern reformers, the art of infanticide; they may have thought that one or two children was enough and so destroyed the balance. They could not submit to let nature take its vulgar course. But in their refined and polite murders, they found themselves dwindling and decaying, and the Hebrews increasing and multiplying; and no matter how shocking it might be to their refined senses, it stood before them as a political fact, and they were in danger of being overwhelmed by the superior fecundity of the Hebrews. Something must be done; what more natural than to serve the Hebrew children as they had served their own? and this, to us and the Christian world, shocking act of brutal murder, was to them simply what they may have done among themselves; perhaps more politely *à la* Madame Restell, but not more effectually. The circumstances are not very dissimilar. When Jesus was plotted against by Herod and the infants put to death, who could complain? *It was law*: we must submit to *law*. The Lord Jehovah, or Jesus the Savior of the world, has no right to interfere with *law*. Jesus was crucified *according to law*. Who can complain? Daniel was thrown into a den of lions *strictly according to law*. The King would have saved him, if he could; but he could not resist *law*. The massacre of St. Bartholemew was in accordance with *law*. The guillotine of Robespierre of France, which cut heads off by the

thousand, did it according to *law*. What right had the victims to complain? But these things were done in barbarous ages. Do not let us, then, who boast of our civilization, follow their example; let us be more just, more generous, more forbearing, more magnanimous. We are told that we are living in a more enlightened age. Our morals are more pure, (?) our ideas more refined and enlarged, our institutions more liberal. "Ours," says Mr. Colfax, "is a land of civil and religious liberty, and the faith of every man is a matter between himself and God alone," providing God don't shock our moral ideas by introducing something that we don't believe in. If He does let Him look out. We won't persecute, very far be that from us; but we will make our platforms, pass Congressional laws and make you submit to them. We may, it is true, have to send out an army, and shed the blood of many; but what of that? It is so much more pleasant to be proscribed and killed according to the laws of the Great Republic, in the "asylum for the oppressed," than to perish ignobly by the decrees of kings, through their miserable minions, in the barbaric ages.

My mind wanders back upwards of thirty years ago, when in the State of Missouri, Mr. McBride, an old grey-haired venerable veteran of the Revolution, with feeble frame and tottering steps, cried to a Missouri patriot: "Spare my life, I am a Revolutionary soldier, I fought for liberty, would you murder me? What is my offense, I believe in God and revelation?" This frenzied disciple of a misplaced faith said, "Take that, you God-d—d Mormon," and with the butt of his gun he dashed his brains out, and he lay quivering there,—his white locks clotted with his own brains and gore on that soil that he had heretofore shed his blood to redeem—a sacrifice at the shrine of liberty! Shades of Franklin, Jefferson and Washington, were you there? Did you gaze on this deed of blood? Did you see your companion in arms thus massacred? Did you know that thousands of American citizens were robbed, disfranchised, driven, pillaged and murdered, for these things seem to be forgotten by our statesmen. Were not these murderers punished? Was not justice done to the outraged? No. They were only "Mormons," and when the Chief Magistrate was applied to, he replied "Your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you." Oh, blessed land of religious freedom! What was this for. Polygamy? No. It was our religion then, it is our religion now. Monogamy or polygamy, it makes no difference. Let me here seriously ask: have we not had more than enough blood in this land? Does the insatiate moloch still cry for more victims?

Let me here respectfully ask with all sincerity, is there not plenty of scope for the action of government at home? What of your gambling hells? What of your gold rings, your whisky rings, your railroad rings, manipulated through the lobby into your Congressional rings. What of

that great moral curse of the land, that great institution of monogamy—*Prostitution?* What of its twin sister—*Infanticide?* I speak to you as a friend. Know ye not that these seething infamies are corrupting and destroying your people? and that like the plague they are permeating your whole social system? that from your gilded palaces to your most filthy purlieus, they are festering and stewing and rotting? What of the thirty thousand prostitutes of New York City and the proportionate numbers of other cities, towns and villages, and their multitudinous pimps and paramours, who are, of course, all, all, honorable men! Here is ample room for the Christian, the philanthropist, and the statesman. Would it not be well to cleanse your own Augean stables? What of the blasted hopes, the tortured and crushed feelings of the thousands of your wives whose whole lives are blighted through your intrigues and lasciviousness? What of the humiliation of your sons and daughters from whom you can not hide your shame? What of the thousands of houseless and homeless children thrown ruthlessly, hopelessly and disgracefully upon the world as outcasts from society, whose fathers and mothers are alike ashamed of them and heartlessly throw them upon the public bounty, the living memorials of your infamy? What of your infanticide, with its murderous, horrid, unnatural, disgusting and damning consequences? Can you legislate for these monogamic crimes, or shall Madame Restell and her pupils continue their public murders and no redress? Shall your fair daughters, the princesses of America, ruthlessly go on in sacrificing their noble children on the altar of this moloch—this demon? What are we drifting to? This “bonehouse,” this “powder magazine” is not in Salt Lake City, a thousand miles from your frontiers; it is in your own cities and towns, villages and homes. It carouses in your secret chambers, and flaunts in the public highway; it meets you in every corner, and besets you in every condition. Your infirmaries and hospitals are reeking with it; your sons and daughters, your wives and husbands are degraded by it. It extends from Louisiana to Minnesota, and from Maine to California. You can't hide yourselves from it; it meets you in your magazines and newspapers, and is disgustingly placarded on your walls,—a living, breathing, loathsome, festering, damning evil. It runs through your very blood, stares out of your eyes and stamps its horrid mark on your features, as indelibly as the mark of Cain; it curses your posterity, it runs riot in the land, withering, blighting, corroding and corrupting the life blood of the nation.

Ye American Statesmen, will you allow this demon to run riot in the land, and while you are speculating about a little political capital to be made out of Utah, allow your nation to be emasculated and destroyed? Is it not humiliating that these enormities should exist in your midst, and

you, as statesmen, as legislators, as municipal and town authorities, as clergymen, reformers and philanthropists, acknowledge yourselves powerless to stop these damning crimes that are gnawing at the very vitals of the most magnificent nation on the earth? We can teach you a lesson on this matter, polygamists as we are. You acknowledge one wife and her children; what of your other associations unacknowledged? We acknowledge and maintain all our wives and all of our children; we don't keep a few only, and turn the others out as outcasts, to be provided for by orphan asylums, or turned as vagabonds on the street to help increase the fearfully growing evil. Our actions are all honest, open and above board. We have no gambling hells, no drunkenness, no infanticide, no houses of assignation, no prostitutes. Our wives are not afraid of our intrigues and debauchery; nor are our wives and daughters corrupted by designing and unprincipled villians. We believe in the chastity and virtue of women, and maintain them. There is not, to-day, in the wide world, a place where female honor, virtue and chastity, are so well protected as in Utah. Would you have us, I am sure you would not, on reflection, reverse the order of God, and exchange the sobriety, the chastity, the virtue and honor of our institutions, for yours, that are so debasing, dishonorable, corrupting, defaming and destructive? We have fled from these things, and with great trouble and care have purged ourselves from your evils, do not try to legislate them upon us nor seek to engulf us in your damning vices.

You may say it is not against your purity that we contend; but against polygamy, which we consider a crying evil. Be it so. Why then, if your system is so much better, does it not bring forth better fruits? Polygamy, it would seem, is the parent of chastity, honor and virtue; Monogamy the author of vice, dishonor and corruption. But you would argue these evils are not our religion; we that are virtuous, are as much opposed to vice and corruption as you are. Then why don't you control it? We can and do. You have your Christian associations, your Young Men's Associations, your Magdalen and Temperance Associations, all of which are praiseworthy. Your cities and towns are full of churches, and you swarm with male and female lecturers, and ministers of all denominations. You have your press, your National and State Legislatures, your police, your municipal and town authorities, your courts, your prisons, your armies, all under the direction of Christian monogamists. You are a nation of Christians. Why are these things not stopped? You possess the moral, the religious, the civil and military power but you don't accomplish it. Is it too much to say “take the beam out of thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to remove the mote that is in thy brother's.”

Respectfully, etc.,

JOHN TAYLOR.

THE MORMON QUESTION

BY

VICE PRESIDENT COLFAX.

From the New York *Independent*.

The demands of the people of Utah Territory for immediate admission into the Union as a State, made at their recent Conference meeting, and to be presented by their delegate at the approaching session of Congress, compels the nation to meet face to face, a question it has apparently endeavored to ignore. I speak of it as "a demand," because the appeal is in sharp and unusual language for a petition. It is claimed as a right, and the refusal to act on previous applications resented as a wrong.

But the discussion of this question will necessarily take a wider range than the application itself. It will embrace in its scope the present condition of that people, and whether Congress owes any duty whatever to its insulted laws, to the officers charged with their execution, and to the law-abiding people resident within the limits of the Territory.

The remarkable conversation between Brigham Young and Senator Trumbull must still be fresh in the popular mind. In it the former person threatened, if the officers of the United States acted objectionably to him, he would eject them from the Territory; and the recent expulsion of prominent members of his church, for doubting his infallibility proves that he regards his power as equal to any emergency and has a will equal to his power. I propose in this article to examine, in the light of history, some phases of the Mormon question, treating of those especially which are the favorite themes of the Mormon leaders.

I. THEIR FERTILIZING OF THE DESERT.

For this they claim great credit; and I would not detract one iota from all they are legitimately entitled to. It was a desert when they first emigrated thither. They

have made large portions of it fruitful and productive, and their chief city is beautiful in location and attractive in its gardens and shrubbery. But the solution of it all is in one word—WATER. What seemed to the eye a desert became fruitful when irrigated; and the mountains whose crests are clothed in perpetual snow, furnished, in the unfailing supplies of their ravines, the necessary fertilizer. I need only allude to the constant market they have had for their products—first, by the almost continuous procession of teams crossing the continent, which stopped there naturally for supplies, refitting, etc.; and secondly, by the large demand from the mining regions of Idaho and Montana, of which they were the nearest food-producing neighbor. All this has tended to enrich them; and the church leaders, whose tithings depended on the products of the people, sedulously and wisely in culcated industry. But when we contrast their development, in the twenty-two years since 1847, with the development of Colorado Territory in the ten years since 1859, it does not seem as unexampled as the magnates of their church assume.

II. THEIR PERSECUTIONS.

This also is one of their favorite themes. Constantly is it reiterated by their apostles and bishops from week to week, and from year to year. It is discoursed about in their Tabernacle and their ward and town churches. It is written about in their periodicals and papers. It is talked about with nearly every stranger that comes into their midst. They have been driven from place to place, they claim, solely on account of their religious belief. Their faith has subjected them to the wickedest persecutions by unbelievers. They have been de-

spoiled, they insist of their property, maltreated in their persons, buffeted and cast out, because they would not renounce their professions and their revelations. I abhor as much as any one can abhor, persecutions of any denomination, or of any people, on account of their religious creed. But history tells us that what they denounce was caused by far different reasons. I do not attempt to decide that the charges against them were all well-founded, for I was not in such close vicinity as to be cognizant of them from my own knowledge. My object, by this historical retrospect, is to show that they were not driven from any region on account of hostility to their religion, as they so persistently assert.

Their church was first established at Manchester, N. Y., in 1830; and their first removal was in 1831, to Kirtland, Ohio, which they declared was revealed to them as the site of their New Jerusalem. Thence their leaders went west to search a new location, which they found in Jackson county, Mo.; dedicated a site for another New Jerusalem there, and returned to Kirtland to remain for five years, avowedly to make money. A bank was established there by them; large quantities of bills of doubtful value issued; and, growing out of charges of fraudulent dealing, Smith and Rigdon were tarred and feathered in 1832. This was the first persecution; and, unjustifiable as such outrages are, this one was based on alleged fraud, and not on religious belief. In January, 1838, the bank failed; and, to avoid arrest for fraud, the leaders fled in the night to Missouri. Their followers joined them there, and were soon accused by the people of "plundering and burning habitations, and of secret assassinations." Nor do these charges against them rest on the testimony of those who had not been of their own faith. In October, 1838, T. B. Marsh, ex-President of the Twelve Apostles of their church, and Orson Hyde, one of the Apostles, made affidavits before an officer in Ray county, Mo., in which Marsh swore, and Hyde corroborated it:

"They have among them a company consisting of all that are considered true Mormons, called the Danites, who have taken an oath to support the heads of the church in all things, whether right or wrong. I have heard the prophet say that he would yet tread down his enemies, and walk over their dead bodies; that, if he was not let alone, he would be a second Mahammed to this generation, and that he would make it one gore of blood from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean."

The sermon of Sidney Rigdon, the 4th of July previous, in which he had threatened "that, if they were disturbed, they would make it a war of extermination with their enemies, till the last drop of blood was spilled, carrying the seat of war to their own houses and their own families," seemed to confirm the sworn testimony above quoted of those who had been at that very time in the highest places of the church. And, when they fortified their towns, and defied

the officers of the law, it added, of course, fuel to the flame of public excitement. The militia of the State were finally called out, and, yielding to their large numbers, the Mormons capitulated, agreeing to leave Missouri and go to Nauvoo, Ill. The Governor of Missouri, in his message, gives the reasons for their expulsion as follows:

"These people had violated the laws of the land, by open and armed resistance to them; they had instituted among themselves a government of their own, independent of, and in opposition to, the Government of this State; they had, at an inclement season of the year, driven the inhabitants of an entire county from their homes, ravaged their crops and destroyed their dwellings."

There is nothing as to their religion here, unless they may claim that, as in the case of polygamy, an assumed revelation justified them in their conduct.

In Nauvoo they remained till 1846. The disturbance, which finally caused them to leave that city, was not in consequence of their religious creed. Foster and Law, who had been Mormons, renounced the faith and established an anti-Mormon paper at Nauvoo, called the *Expositor*. In May, 1844, the prophet and a party of his followers, on the publication of its first number, attacked the office, tore it down, and destroyed the presses. The proprietors fled for their lives to Carthage, the county seat, and obtained warrants for Joseph and Hyrum Smith and sixteen others. The constable who sought to serve them was driven from Nauvoo. The Authorities thereupon called out the militia to enforce the law, and the Mormons armed themselves to resist it; but at last the two Smiths surrendered, and were taken to the county jail at Carthage, which was strongly guarded. A party of Missourians crossed the river, overpowered the guard, and murdered the prisoners. It was murder, and nothing else, for the prisoners had surrendered on the promise of the Government to protect them, and the guiltiest criminals have a right to a fair, public and impartial trial. But the origin of this tragedy can be traced *directly* to the illegal mobbing of a free press for daring to publicly denounce Mormonism and its practices. In 1845 the Nauvoo charter was repealed by the Illinois Legislature, and they made preparations to leave, hastened by another conflict with the people of the vicinity. In 1846 they reached Council Bluffs, and in 1847 Brigham Young and the advanced guard of the Mormons arrived at Salt Lake Valley.

I may briefly, under this head, trace the history of their collisions, in their present region, with the General Government.

In September, 1850, Congress organized Utah Territory, and President Fillmore appointed Brigham Young (who, at Smith's death, had become President of the Church) as Governor. The next year the Federal Judges were compelled by Brigham Young's threats of violence to flee from the

Territory, and the laws of the United States were openly defied. Colonel Steptoe was commissioned as Governor, in the place of Young; but, after wintering with a battalion of soldiers at Salt Lake City, he resigned, not deeming it safe or prudent to accept. Brigham Young, the Sabbath after he left, preached a sermon in the Tabernacle, declaring:

"I am and will be Governor; and no power can hinder it, until the Lord Almighty says, 'Brigham, you need not be Governor any longer.'"

Most of the civil officers of the Territory who were commissioned at the same time with Steptoe, arrived a few months after his departure, and were harassed and threatened as their predecessors had been. In February, 1856, a mob of armed Mormons, instigated by sermons from the heads of the Church, broke into the United States Court-room, and at the point of the bowie-knife compelled Judge Drummond to adjourn his court *sine die*; and very soon all of the United States officers, except the Indian agent, were compelled to flee from the Territory.

President Buchanan now determined to supersede Brigham Young as Governor, effectually. In 1857 he appointed Alfred Cumming, Governor, and Judge Eckles, of Indiana, Chief Justice, and sent them to Utah, with a force of 2,500 soldiers to protect them and to compel obedience to the law. Brigham Young issued a proclamation denouncing the army as a mob, forbidding it to enter the Territory, and calling the people to arms to repel its advance. They fortified Echo Canyon, the gateway of approach to the Mormon capital (through which the Pacific Railroad now runs), and a party of mounted Mormons commenced the war by attacking and destroying several of the supply trains, and cutting off from the rear of the army and driving to Salt Lake 800 United States oxen. The troops, necessarily moving slowly, were overtaken by the snows in November, and wintered near Fort Bridger. In the spring of 1858 the President, through Governor Powell, of Kentucky and Major McCullough, of Texas, offered pardon to all Mormons who would submit themselves to the Federal authority, which was finally accepted. The troops encamped forty miles from the city and remained there till 1860, when they were withdrawn.

This sketch is not colored by any views of my own. I have simply drawn it from history, nothing extenuating nor setting down aught in malice. But the reader will fail to find in it that any of what they call their "persecutions" sprang from their peculiar religious faith.

III. THEIR POLYGAMY.

In their Mormon Bible, publicly proclaimed by them to the world as an inspired revelation, on which rock they had built their church, polygamy is denounced as the wickedest of crimes. David and Solomon are condemned in it for their many

wives and concubines, "which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord." "Wherefore, my brethren, hear me and harken to the word of the Lord; for there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife, and concubines he shall have none; for I, the Lord, delighteth in the chastity of women." The manner in which this positive language is evaded by them is by quoting what occurs subsequently to this in their Book of Mormon, as follows: "For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people. Otherwise they shall hearken unto these things." I need not repeat the argument of the Josephites (the anti-polygamy Mormons) that, if God did declare polygamy abominable, because it violated the chastity of women, he could not possibly make a revelation afterward commanding it. Suffice it to say, the Mormons claim that he did, July 12, 1843, thirteen years after the printing of their original revelation; and on that assumed revelation of 1843 they justify its practice, and their defiance of the law of the United States prohibiting it in all the Territories. But in 1845, two years after this pretended revelation, the leaders of the church, in an official document, formally declared as follows:

"Inasmuch as this Church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication and polygamy, we declare that we believe that one man should have but one wife, and one woman but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again."

The explanation they give of this official denial of a practice, two years after the assumed revelation by which they now justify it, is that it was made from prudential considerations. And without arguing whether this is any moral justification of the act, I propose to inquire whether a revelation of this kind, thus claimed by them, vindicates them in defying the law of the United States upon the subject.

There were three different newspaper reports made of the speech I delivered on the evening of October 5, in front of the Townsend House, in Salt Lake City: one by a Mormon reporter for the Salt Lake *Telegraph*, which was but an abstract, stating that I condemned polygamy and quoted from the Book of Mormon and from "the Doctrines and Covenants" (which is the creed and discipline of the Church); and the other two by reporters for the Chicago *Tribune* and the Springfield *Republican*. The Mormon editor replied in his paper of the next morning that the latter citation (which still embodies, in unchanged phraseology, the emphatic language used by their leaders in 1845, above quoted) was more forcible than the former one from the Mormon Bible, as that was qualified by the words, also quoted above, commencing "For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts," etc. I quote however from the two other reports of what I said, desiring to confine my argument now upon this point to the

illustrations I presented to them, face to face, in their own public street.

The report in the *Chicago Tribune* quotes my remarks as follows:

"You tell me you have the authority of revelation for this defiance of law, and a new revelation, contrary to that recorded in the Book of Mormon, to which I have alluded. I reply that you have no right to overthrow and defy the laws by assumed revelations. If some one should have a revelation to-night, declaring that the strong should seize and possess the wives of the weak, you would surely have none of such a revelation. If there was another revelation that the talented and rich should take the wives of the ignorant and poor, you would certainly trample on it. If the Hindoos should come hither and insist on practicing what they regard as a religious rite—the burning of widows on the funeral piles of their husbands—you would scout such a revelation and such a religion."

The report in the *Springfield Republican* gives the same ideas and illustrations in language as identical as two reports by two different reporters would quote them:

"And yet, while you assume that this later revelation gives you the right to turn your back on your old faith, and to disobey the law, you would not yourselves tolerate others in assuming rights for themselves under revelations they might claim to have received, or under religions they might profess. The Hindoos claimed, as part of their religion, the right to burn widows with the dead bodies of their husbands. If they were to attempt it here, as their religion, you would prevent it by force. If a new revelation were to be proclaimed here that the strong men should have the right to take the wives of the weaker men, that the learned men should take the wives of the unlearned, that the rich men should take the wives of the poor, that those who were powerful and influential should have the right to command the labor and the service of the humbler, as their bond-slaves, you would spurn it, and would rely upon the law and the power of the United States to protect you."

John Taylor, one of the Twelve Apostles, in replying from Salt Lake City, November 2, 1869, in a letter to the *New York Tribune*, to this speech, says that in my "strictures on our institutions there is an apparent faith and sincerity manifested;" but he attacks those strictures and defends their institution in language which, to do him full justice, I quote literally:

"That our country is governed by law, we all admit; but when it is said that no 'assumed revelation justifies any one in trampling on the law,' I would respectfully ask, 'What, not if it interferes with my religious faith, which you state is a matter between God and myself alone?' The assumed revelation referred to is one of the most vital points of our religious faith; it emanates from God, and cannot be legislated away. It is part of the 'everlasting covenant' which God has given to man.

Mr. Colfax has a perfect right to state and feel that he does not believe the revelation on which my religious faith is based, nor in my faith at all; but has he the right to dictate my religious faith? I think not. He does not consider it religion. It is, nevertheless, mine. If a revelation from God is not a religion, what is it? His not believing it is from God makes no difference.

"All religions are tolerated with us, and all revelations or assumed revelations. We take the liberty of disbelieving some of them, but none are interfered with; and, in relation to turning our back on our old religion, we have never done it. Concerning our permitting the Hindoos to burn their widows, it is difficult to say what we should do."

As to his statements that "all religions are tolerated with us," I would say that the refusal to allow the sons of their first prophet, Joseph Smith, to preach the old anti-polygamous Mormon doctrine in their Tabernacle, ward houses, public buildings or the streets, and the threats and abuse to which they have been subjected ever since they attempted to preach in the few Gentile houses open to them, with the unpunished murderers of Gentiles, like Dr. Robinson, Brassfield and others, and the recent brutal attacks on Beadle, Watters and others, for daring to speak against polygamy, are specimens of "toleration" rather novel in the United States.

But I come directly to the apostle's argument. He passes over all the illustrations cited except one; and it is significant that about the same time he was writing it, when Godbe and others were being expelled from the church for doubting the infallibility of Brigham Young, Daniel H. Wells, the Mayor of Salt Lake, and now the next in authority in the church to their President, declared that one might as well dispute the infallibility of the Almighty, showing that whatever revelations Brigham Young may see fit to proclaim, now or hereafter, they are to be obeyed unquestioningly, no matter what law they repudiate, what authority they contravene, or what crime they may command. And, in the full and frank conversation of our party, in 1865, at the residence of Mr. Young, with himself and his apostles, Mr. Carrington, then editor of their church organ, declared that if he received a revelation through the church to kill his son he would obey it unhesitatingly! The details of this conversation are to be found in Mr. Bowles' book, "Across the Continent," published some years since.

The one illustration cited by me, to which Apostle Taylor does see fit to refer, is that of the Hindoos; and he confesses, in reply to it, that "it is difficult to say what we should do about our permitting the Hindoos to burn their widows." It is not, however, I am glad to remark, "difficult to say" what the nation would do, in spite of the claim that it is part of their religious faith; and history tells us what a civilized nation, akin to ours, actually *did*, when they had the power.

The suttee, as the burning of widows with their husbands is called, can be traced back as an alleged religious rite in India for 3,200 years—as far as fourteen centuries before the Christian era. The Brahmins claimed, as the Mormons do now in regard to their institution, that it was taught in their sacred books, and conferred the highest merit on both husband and wife. She was to remain with her husband in the regions of the blessed thirty-five millions of years. But, if she did not consent to it, she was to have no place there. It has been proven, however, recently, on an examination of these alleged sacred books that, the passages quoted by the Brahmins were falsely quoted, and in some instances declared the very reverse of their rendering. [It was on account of this identity of argument that I quoted at Salt Lake from the *original* volumes of the Mormon faith their strong denunciations of polygamy.] In the sixteenth century the Mohammedan Emperor Akbar prohibited the suttee, but without effect. After the East India Company obtained power there, they endeavored for a dozen years to regulate it; requiring, among other things, that the sacrifice of the widow should be unquestionably voluntary. But such was the influence of the "religious" teachings of their leaders that the attempted regulation utterly failed. In Bengal, alone, from 1815 to 1826, there were no less than 7,154 cases of suttee recorded. Finally, Sir Wm. Bentinck, Governor General of India, determined to extirpate it, denounced it as murder, and required it to be treated and published as such. This, history tells us, created much excitement in Bengal, and, indeed, all over India, the Brahmins denouncing it with great violence (as the Mormons denounce our anti-polygamy law of 1862) as an "interference with their religion." They even sent an agent to England, with large sums of money, to procure its repeal. But England disregarded their "religious" arguments, and stood as one man, with the whole power of the kingdom, by the Governor General; and wherever English power is recognized, there, this so-called religious rite is now sternly forbidden and prevented. England, with united voice, said "Stop!" and India obeyed.

Such is my answer—the answer of England, the answer of history—to the Apostle's argument. The Brahmin reasoning that the woman consented (akin as it is to the Mormon argument now) had no effect. For England understood the power of religious fanaticism; of assumed revelation, of a potential public opinion. The claim that "religious faith" commanded it was powerless; and it went down as a "relict of barbarism," unfit to be tolerated where a civilized people had the power and the will to abolish it.

I pass over the obvious argument that wherever polygamy prevails in the world woman occupies necessarily a degraded and inferior condition; and wherever monogamy has been the law, she has been elevated, till all good men recognize her as

the equal sharer of her husband's happiness and home. And I come now to another one of Apostle Taylor's arguments, a favorite and daily argument with all Mormon preachers.

"Let me here," she says, "respectfully ask, is there not plenty of scope for the action of the Government at home? What of your gambling hells? What of your gold rings, your whisky rings, your railroad rings, manipulated through the lobby into your Congressional rings? What of that great moral curse of the land—that great institution of monogamy—prostitution? What of its twin-sister, infanticide? We can teach you a lesson, polygamists as we are. You acknowledge one wife and her children. What of your associations unacknowledged? We acknowledge and maintain all our wives and all our children," etc.

I might answer some of these questions with the *argumentum ad hominem*. As to "infanticide," I might ask, What did the Mormon sexton's report of deaths in Salt Lake City, the month before we were there, show, as officially published? that over seven-eighths of all the deaths were infants. I do not charge infant murder, of course; but no such mortality is known in the absence of pestilence where monogamy exists. As to "rings," I might reply that the whisky rings and gold rings have already felt the power of this Administration; and I might ask, in return, by what authority the Mormon Territorial Legislature granted to the magnates of their church—their "rings," to use the Apostle's phrase—valuable properties that did not belong to them, and without compensation too? But I prefer to meet this argument on the main point squarely. The "great moral curse of the land," as he calls it, is but the exception to the general rule. How much of it exists in our forty millions of people I do not pretend to compute. But it is everywhere banned by the law, banned by public opinion, banned by religion, banned by morality, and exists, where it does exist, in defiance of a law; while the great bulk, the overwhelming proportion of the people, live faithfully, as our first parents did, one husband with one wife. In Utah, what they condemn as "the great institution of monogamy" is practiced under the pretence of religion, of revelation, of duty, of morality. Nor is this all. "Religion" teaches them that a man may take as one of his wives his half sister, *the offspring of his own mother*. "Religion" tells them that it is right and fitting that the daughters of his own brothers and sisters may be made the mothers of his children. "Religion" assures them that a man may take a mother and all her daughters into the sacred companionship of wifehood together, living alternately in that relation with each as the weeks and months pass by, and having the children of them all, by one father, domiciled under the same roof. Need I pursue this argument further? If such incest and

bigamy are to be tolerated and vindicated as "religion," it is certainly no wonder that the Apostle finds it "difficult to say" whether the Hindoos ought to be restrained in *their* fiery "religious" rites, if they immigrated hither.

IV. IS UTAH WITHIN THE UNITED STATES?

Here only, in the whole civilized world, are practices like these I have referred to tolerated. Here only, in the nation, are the laws of the United States openly ignored and defied. Here only, from ocean to ocean, dare any man proclaim that, as he has done before, he will drive out the officers of the Republic if they perform their duties objectionably to him. Four long years the nation struggled, in an agony of blood, to compel obedience to its laws and submission to its authority all over the South. I would not revive the recollections of that struggle, now happily ended, except to say that hundreds of thousands of those who warred against us were led by the pulpit and by statesmen alike, as well as by the public opinion which surrounded them, to believe that they were right. But the nation resolved that wherever the territorial area of the Union extended, and wherever the flag of the Union had a right to float, there the laws of the Union should be obeyed and the authority

of the Union should be respected. Unlike those, however, who sought to secede from the Union, the Mormons claim the benefit of every law they see fit to approve—homestead, naturalization, protection of property by courts and Government, legislative and judicial offices in their Territory, &c.—and trample under foot such other laws of the Government under whose flag is their home, as they see fit to reject. It is time to understand whether the authority of the nation or the authority of Brigham Young is the supreme power in Utah; whether the laws of the United States or the laws of the Mormon Church have precedence within its limits.

I have endeavored fairly, and without bitterness, to discuss this question in the various phases in which it is presented by the Mormon preachers themselves. I have not looked to armies as the solution of this question. But there is a moral power in the people of the United States, if they speak in regard to this stain on the national escutcheon, with one united voice, as England did to the Brahmins. There is an authority in the Congress of the United States which is everywhere else recognized. And in that power, and in that authority, if combined and made manifest, I have faith and hope.



REPLY OF JOHN TAYLOR

TO THE

HONORABLE VICE-PRESIDENT SCHUYLER COLFAX,

ON

THE MORMON QUESTION

Mr. Colfax has replied to my article by another, published in the New York *Independent*, December 2nd, headed "The Mormon Question."

I have always been taught to reverence men in authority. My religion has not lessened the force of that precept. I am sorry to be under the necessity of differing from the honorable gentleman who stands second in authority in the greatest and freest nation in the world. My motto has always been and now is: Honor to whom honor is due; yet, while I feel bound to pay homage to a man of his talent and position I cannot but realize that "all men are now free and equal," and that I live in a land where the press, thought and speech are free. If it had been a personal difference I should have had no controversy with Mr. Colfax, and the honorable gentleman, I am sure, will excuse me for standing up in the defense of what I know to be a traduced and injured people. I would not accuse the gentleman of misrepresentation. I cannot help knowing, however, that he is misinformed in relation to most of his historical details; and justice to an outraged community, as well as truth, requires that such statements should be met and the truth vindicated. I cannot but think that in refusing the proffered hospitality of our city which, of course, he had a perfect right to do, he threw himself among a class of men that were, perhaps, not very reliable in historical data.

I am not surprised at his apparent prejudices; I can account for his antipathies, but cannot permit Mr. Colfax, even ignorantly, to traduce my friends without defense. He states that "The demand of the

people of Utah Territory for immediate admission into the Union, as a State, made at their recent conference meeting and to be presented by their delegate at the approaching session of Congress, compels the nation to meet face to face, a question which it has apparently endeavored to ignore."

Is there anything remarkable in a Territory applying for admission into the Union? How have other States entered the Union since the admission of the first thirteen? Were they not all Territories in their turn, and generally applied to Congress for, and obtained admission? Why should Utah be an exception? She has from time to time, as a constitutional requisition, presented a petition with a constitution containing a republican form of government. Since her application California, Nevada, Kansas, Minnesota, Oregon and Nebraska have been admitted. And why should Congress, as Mr. Colfax says: "Endeavor to ignore Utah?" And why should it be so difficult a question to "meet face to face?" Has it become so very difficult for Congress to do right? What is the matter? Some remarkable conversation was had between Brigham Young and Senator Trumbull. Now, as I did not happen to hear this conversation, I cannot say what it was. One thing, however, I do know, that I have seen hundreds of distinguished gentlemen call on President Young and they have been uniformly better treated than has been reciprocated. But something was said about United States officers. I am sorry to say that many United States officers have so deported themselves that they have not been much above par with us. They may indeed be satraps and require homage and obeisance; but we have yet to

learn to bow the knee. Brigham Young does not generally speak even to a United States Senator with honeyed words and measured sentences; but as an ingenuous and honest man. But we are told that "the recent expulsion of prominent members of his church for doubting his infallibility proves that he regards his power as equal to any emergency and has a will equal to his power."

I am sorry to have to say that Mr. Colfax is mistaken here. No person was ever dismissed from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for disbelieving in the infallibility of President Young. I do not believe he is infallible, for one; and have so taught publicly. I am in the Church yet. Neither have I ever heard President Young make any such pretensions. Mr. Colfax is a good politician, but he makes sad blunders in polemics. He makes a magnificent Speaker and President of the Senate; I am afraid, however, that as a preacher he would not be so successful. The honorable gentleman now proceeds to divide his subject and commences:

"I. THEIR FERTILIZING OF THE DESERT."

"For this they claim great credit, and I would not detract an iota from all they are legitimately entitled to. It was a desert when they first emigrated thither. They have made large portions of it fruitful and productive, and their chief city is beautiful in location and attractive in its gardens and shrubbery. But the solution of it all is in one word—water. What seemed to the eye a desert became fruitful when irrigated, and the mountains, whose crests are clothed in perpetual snow, furnished, in the unerring supplies of their ravines, the necessary fertilizer."

Water! *Mirabile dictu!* Here I must help Mr. C. out.

This wonderful little water nymph, after playing with the clouds on our mountain tops, frolicking with the snow and rain in our rugged gorges for generations, coquetting with the sun and dancing to the sheen of the moon, about the time the "Mormons" came here took upon herself to perform a great miracle, and descending to the valley with a wave of her magic wand and the mysterious words, "hiccory, dicory, dock," cities and streets were laid out, crystal waters flowed in ten thousand rippling streams, fruit trees and shrubbery sprang up, gardens and orchards abounded, cottages and mansions were organized, fruits, flowers and grain in all their elysian glory appeared and the desert blossomed as the rose; and this little frolicking elf, so long confined to the mountains and water courses proved herself far more powerful than Cinderella or Aladdin. Oh! Jealousy, thou green-eyed monster! Can no station in life be protected from the shimmer of thy glamour? must our talented and honorable Vice-President be subjected to thy jaundiced touch? But to be serious, did water tunnel through our mountains, construct dams, canals and ditches, lay out

our cities and towns, import and plant choice fruit-trees, shrubs and flowers cultivate the land and cover it with the cattle on a thousand hills, erect churches, school-houses and factories, and transform a howling wilderness into a fruitful field and garden? If so, why does not the Green River, the Snake River, Bear River, Colorado, the Platte and other rivers perform the same prodigies? Unfortunately for Mr. Colfax, it was "Mormon" polygamists who did it. The Erie, the Welland, the Pennsylvania and Suez canals are only water. What if a stranger on gazing upon the statuary in Washington and our magnificent Capitol, and after rubbing his eyes were to exclaim, "Eureka! it is only rock and mortar and wood." This discoverer would announce that instead of the development of art, intelligence, industry and enterprise, its component parts were simply stone, mortar and wood. Mr. Colfax has discovered that our improvements are attributable to water.

We next come to another division and quote

THEIR PERSECUTIONS.

"This also is one of their favorite themes. Constantly it is reiterated by their apostles and bishops, from week to week, and from year to year. It is discoursed about in their tabernacles and their ward and town churches. It is written about in their periodicals and papers. It is talked about with nearly every stranger that comes into their midst. They have been driven from place to place, they claim, solely on account of their religious belief. Their faith has subjected them to the wickedest persecutions by unbelievers. They have been despoiled, they insist, of their property; maltreated in their persons, buffeted and cast out, because they would not renounce their professions and their revelations."

This, sir, is all true; does it falsify a truth to repeat it? The Mormons make these statements and are always prepared to prove them. I referred to some of these things in my last; Mr. Colfax has not disproved them. He now states, "I do not attempt to decide that the charges against them are well founded." Why then are they made? Has it become so desirable to put down the Mormons that unfounded charges must be preferred against them?

"Their church was first established at Manchester, New York, in 1830, and their first removal was in 1831, to Kirtland, Ohio, which they declared was revealed to them as the site of their New Jerusalem." (A mistake) "Thence their leaders went west to search a new location, which they found in Jackson county, Mo., and dedicated a site for another New Jerusalem there, and returned to Kirtland to remain for five years avowedly to make money;" (an error) "a bank was established there by them; large quantities of bills, of doubtful value issued, and growing out of charges of fraudulent dealing, Smith and Rigdon were tarred and feathered." This is a gross perversion,

Smith and Rigdon were tarred and feathered in March, 1832, in Hiram, Portage county; the bank was organized Dec. 2nd, 1836, in Kirtland.

Mr. C. continues: "And unjustifiable as such outrages are this one was based on alleged fraud and not on religious belief." Allow me to state that this persecution was based on religious belief and not on fraud, and that this statement is a perversion, for the bank was not opened until several years after the tarring and feathering referred to. But did the bank fail? yes, in 1837, about five years after, in the great financial crisis; and so did most of the banks in the United States, in Canada, a great many in England, France and other parts of Europe. Is it so much more criminal for the Mormons to make a failure than others? Their bank was swallowed in the general financial maelstrom, and some time after the failure of the bank, the bills were principally redeemed.

"They fled to Missouri, their followers joined them there, they were soon accused of plundering and burning habitations and with secret assassinations." Was there no law in Missouri? The Missourians certainly did not lack either the will or the power to enforce it. Why were not these robbers, incendiaries, and assassins dealt with? Mr. C. continues:—"Nor do these charges against them rest on the testimony of those who had not been of their own faith; in October 1838, T. B. Marsh, ex-president of the twelve apostles of their church, and Orson Hyde, one of the apostles, made affidavits before an officer in Ray county, Missouri; in which Marsh swore and Hyde corroborated it.

"They have among them a company consisting of all that are true Mormons, called the Danites, who have taken an oath to support the heads of the church in all things, whether right or wrong. I have heard the prophet say that he would yet tread down his enemies and walk over their dead bodies; that, if he was not let alone he would be a second Mohammed to this generation, and that he would make it one gore of blood from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean." I am sorry to say that Thomas B. Marsh, did make that affidavit, and that Orson Hyde stated that he knew part of it and believed the other; and it would be disingenuous in me to deny it; but it is not true that these things existed, for I was there and knew to the contrary; and so did the people of Missouri, and so did the Governor of Missouri. How do you account for their acts? Only on the score of the weakness of our common humanity. We were living in troublous times, and all men's nerves are not proof against such shocks as we then had to endure. Mobs were surrounding us on every hand, burning our houses, murdering our people, destroying our crops, killing our cattle. About this time that horrible massacre at Hauns Mill took place, where men, women and children, were indiscriminately butchered, and

their remains, for want of other sepulture, thrown into a well. Messages were coming in from all parts, of fire, devastation, blood and death. We threw up a few logs and fences for protection; this, I suppose, is what Mr. Colfax calls, "fortifying their towns and defying the officers of law." If wagons and fences and a few house logs are fortifications, we were fortified; and if the mob, whose hands were dripping with the blood of men, women and children, whom they had murdered in cold blood, were "officers of the law" then we are guilty of the charge. I cannot defend the acts of Thomas B. Marsh or Orson Hyde, although the latter had been laboring under a severe fever, and was at the time only just recovering, no more than I could defend the acts of Peter when he cursed and swore and denied Jesus; nor the acts of Judas who betrayed Him; but, if Peter, after going out and "weeping bitterly," was restored, and was afterwards a chief apostle; so did Orson Hyde repent sincerely and weep bitterly, and was restored and has since been to Palestine, Germany and other nations. Thomas B. Marsh returned a poor broken down man, and begged to live with us; he got up before assembled thousands and stated: "If you wish to see the effect of apostacy, look at me." He was a poor wreck of a man, a helpless drivelling child and he is since dead. A people are not to be judged by such acts as these. But the Governor of Missouri in his message says:

"These people had violated the laws of the land by open and armed resistance to them; they had instituted among themselves a government of their own, independent of, and in opposition to, the government of this State" (false); "they had, at an inclement season of the year, driven the inhabitants of an entire county from their homes, ravaging their crops and destroying their dwellings."

Now, if the Governor had reversed this statement it would have been true; the falsity of it I stand prepared to prove anywhere. Mr. Governor, it was your bull that gored our ox. We were robbed, pillaged and exiled, were you? Our men, women and children were murdered without redress; driven from their homes in an inclement season of the year, and died by hundreds, in the State of Illinois, in consequence of hardships and exposure.

The legislature of Missouri, to cover their infamy, appropriated the munificent sum of \$2000 to help the suffering "Mormons." Their agent took a few miserable traps, the sweepings of an old store; for the balance of the patrimony he sent into Davis County and killed our hogs, which we were then prevented from doing, and brought them to feed the poor "Mormons" as part of the legislative appropriation. This I saw. On this subject I could quote volumes. I will only say that when authenticated testimony was presented to Martin Van Buren, the President of the United States, he re-

pled, "Your cause is just; but I can do nothing for you."

Mr. Colfax, in summing up, says, "There is nothing in this as to their religion." Read the following:

Tuesday, November 6th, 1838, General Clark made the following remarks to a number of men in Far West, Mo.:

"Gentlemen, you whose names are not attached to this list of names will now have the privilege of going to your fields and providing corn and wood for your families. Another article yet remains for you to comply with, that is, that you leave the State forthwith, and whatever may be your feelings concerning this, or whatever your innocence is nothing to me. The orders of the Governor to me were that you should be exterminated. I would advise you to scatter abroad and never again organize yourselves with bishops, presidents, etc., lest you excite the jealousies of the people."

Is not this persecution for religion?

Mr. Colfax next takes us to Nauvoo and says, "In Nauvoo they remained until 1846; the disturbances which finally caused them to leave the city were not in consequence of their religious creed. Foster and Law, who had been Mormons, renounced the faith and established an anti Mormon paper at Nauvoo, called the *Expositor*. In May, 1844, the prophet and a party of his followers, on the publication of his first number, attacked the office, tore it down and destroyed the press."

This is a mistake. The *Expositor* was an infamous sheet, containing vile and libelous attacks upon individuals, and the citizens generally, and would not have been allowed to exist in any other community a day. The people complained to the authorities about it and after mature deliberation the City Council passed an ordinance ordering its removal as a nuisance, and it was removed. In a conversation with Governor Ford, on this subject, afterwards, when informed of the circumstances, he said to me, "I cannot blame you for destroying it, but I wish it had been done by a mob." I told him that we preferred a legal course, and that Blackstone described a libelous press as a nuisance and liable to be removed; that our city charter gave us the power to remove nuisances; and that if it was supposed we had contravened the law, we were amenable for our acts and refused not an investigation. Mr. Colfax's history says, "The authorities thereupon called out the militia to enforce the law, and the Mormons armed themselves to resist it." The facts were that armed mobs were organized in the neighborhood of Carthage and Warsaw. The Governor came to Carthage and sent a deputation to Joseph Smith, requesting him to send another to him, with authentic documents in relation to the late difficulties. Dr. J. M. Bernhisel, our late delegate to Congress and myself, were de-

puted as a committee to wait upon the Governor. His Excellency thought it best (although we had had a hearing before) for us to have a rehearing on the press question. We called his attention to the unsettled state of the country, and the general mob spirit that prevailed; and asked if we must bring a guard; that we felt fully competent to protect ourselves, but were afraid it would create a collision. He said, "We had better come entirely unarmed," and pledged his faith and the faith of the State for our protection. We went unarmed to Carthage, trusting in the Governor's word. Owing to the unsettled state of affairs we entered into recognizances to appear at another time. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, for treason. They were remanded to jail, and while there were murdered. Not "by a party of mob," as Mr. Colfax's history states, "from Missouri," but by men in Illinois, who, with blackened faces, perpetrated the hellish deed; they did not overpower the guard, as stated, the guard helped them in the performance of their fiendish act. I saw them for I was there at the time. I could a tale unfold that would implicate editors, officers, military and civil, ministers of the gospel, and other wolves in sheep's clothing.

The following will show in part what our position was:

"A proclamation to the citizens of Hancock County:—Whereas, a mob of from one to two hundred men, under arms, have gathered themselves together in the southwest part of Hancock county, and are at this time destroying the dwellings, and other buildings, stacks of grain and other property, of a portion of our citizens in the most inhuman manner, compelling defenceless women and children to leave their sick beds and exposing them to the rays of the parching sun, there to lie and suffer without aid or assistance of a friendly hand, to minister to their wants, in their suffering condition. The rioters spare not the widow nor orphan, and while I am writing this proclamation, the smoke is arising to the clouds, and the flame is devouring four buildings which have just been set on fire, by the rioters. Thousands of dollars worth of property has already been consumed, an entire settlement of about sixty or seventy families laid waste, the inhabitants thereof are fired upon, narrowly escaping with their lives, and forced to flee before the ravages of the mob. Therefore I — command said rioters and other peace breakers to desist, forthwith, and I hereby call upon the law-abiding citizens, as a *posse committatus* of Hancock county, to give their united aid in suppressing the rioters and maintaining the supremacy of the law.

J. B. BACKENSTOS,
Sheriff of Hancock County, Ills."

Mr. Backenstos was not a Mormon.

We set out in search of an asylum, in some far off wilderness, where we hoped

we could enjoy religious liberty. Previous to our departure a committee composed of Stephen A. Douglas, Gen. John J. Harding, both members of Congress, the Attorney General of Illinois, Major Warren and others, met in my house, in Nauvoo, in conference with the Twelve, to consult about our departure. They were then presented the picture of devastation that would follow our exodus, and felt ashamed to have to acknowledge that State and United States authorities had to ask a persecuted and outraged people to leave their property, homes, and firesides for their oppressors to enjoy; not because we had not a good Constitution and liberal government, but because there was not virtue and power in the State and United States authorities to protect them in their rights. We made a treaty with them to leave; after this treaty, when the strong men and the majority of the people had left, and there was nothing but old and infirm men, boys, women and children to battle with, like ravenous wolves, impatient for their prey, they violated their treaty by making war upon them, and driving them houseless, homeless, and destitute across the Mississippi river.

The archaeologist, the antiquarian, and traveler need not then have gone to Herculaneum, to Pompeii, to Egypt or Yucatan, in search of ruins, or deserted cities, they could have found a deserted temple, forsaken family altars, desolate hearth stones and homes, a deserted city much easier: the time, the nineteenth century:—the place, the United States of America:—the State, Illinois, and the city, Nauvoo.

While fleeing, as fugitives, from the United States, and in Indian territory, a requisition was made by the Government for 500 men to assist in conquering Mexico, the very nation to whose territory we were fleeing in our exile; we supplied the demand and though despoiled and expatriated, were the principal agents in planting the United States flag in Upper California.

I again quote:

"In September, 1850, Congress organized Utah Territory, and President Fillmore appointed Brigham Young (who at Smith's death, had become President of the church) as Governor. The next year the Federal Judges were compelled by Brigham Young's threats of violence to flee from the Territory, and the laws of the United States were openly defied. Col. Steptoe was commissioned Governor in place of Young, but after wintering with a battalion of soldiers at Salt Lake, he resigned not deeming it safe, or prudent to accept."

So far from this being the case, Col. Steptoe was on the best of terms with our community, and previous to his appointment as Governor, a number of our prominent gentle citizens, judges, Col. Steptoe and some of his officers signed a petition to the President praying for the continuance of President Young in office.

He continues: "In February, 1856, a mob of armed Mormons instigated by sermons from the heads of the church, broke into the United States court room and at the point of the bowie knife compelled Judge Drummond to adjourn his court *sine die*;" (this is a sheer fabrication, there never was such an occurrence in Utah) "and very soon all the United States officers, except the Indian Agent, were compelled to flee from the Territory." Now this same amiable and persecuted Judge Drummond brought with him a courtesan from Washington, whom he introduced as his wife, and had her with him on the bench. The following will show the mistake in regard to Col. Steptoe and others:

"To His Excellency Franklin Pierce,
President of the United States.

"Your petitioners would respectfully represent that, Whereas Governor Brigham Young possesses the entire confidence of the people of this Territory, without distinction of party or sect, and from personal acquaintance and social intercourse, we find him to be a firm supporter of the Constitution and laws of the United States, and a tried pillar of Republican institutions; and having repeatedly listened to his remarks, in private as well as in public assemblies, do know he is the warm friend and able supporter of Constitutional liberty, the rumors published in the States, to the contrary, notwithstanding; and having canvassed to our satisfaction, his doings as Governor and Superintendent of Indian affairs, and also the distribution of appropriations for public buildings for the Territory, we do most cordially and cheerfully represent that the same has been expended to the best interest of the nation, and, whereas, his appointment would better subserve the Territorial interest than the appointment of any other man."

"We therefore take great pleasure in recommending him to your favorable consideration, and do earnestly request his appointment as Governor, and Superintendent of Indian affairs for this Territory.

"Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, December 30th, 1854. J. F. Kinney, Chief Justice Supreme Court, Leonidas Shaver, Assistant Justice, E. J. Steptoe, Lt. Col. U. S. Army, John F. Reynolds, Bvt. Maj., Rufus Ingales, Capt., Sylvester Mowry, La Chett, L. Livingston, Jno. C. Chandler, Robert O. Tyler, Benj. Allston, Lieutenants; Chas. A. Perry, Wm. G. Rankin, Horace R. Kirby, Medical Staff, U. S. A. Henry, C. Branch, C. C. Branham, C. J. Bipe, Lucian L. Bedell, Wm. Mac, J. M. Hockaday, and other strangers."

There was really no more cause for an army then than there is now, and there is no more reason now, in reality, than there was then, and the bills of Messrs. Cragin and Cullom are only a series of the same infamies that we have before experienced, and are designed, as all unbiassed men know, to create a difficulty and collision,

aided by the clamor of speculators and contractors, who have of course, a very disinterested desire to relieve their venerated uncle by thrusting their patriotic hands into his pockets.

I am sorry to be under the painful necessity of repudiating Mr. Colfax's history. It is said that "corporations have no souls," and nations are not proverbially conscientious about their nomenclature or records. Diplomacy generally finds language suited to its objects. When the British nation granted to the East India Company their stupendous monopoly, that Company subjugated and brought really into serfdom about one hundred millions of human beings; and compelled many to raise poison (opium) instead of bread. History calls that "*trade and commerce.*" After the Chinese had passed a law making the introduction of opium contraband, in defiance of this law, they sent cargoes of the tabooed article and illicitly introduced their poison. The Chinese, unwilling to be poisoned, confiscated and destroyed these contraband goods. History calls it a *casus belli*, and when the Chinese, unwilling to be coerced, resisted the British force, that nation slaughtered vast hordes of them, because they had the power; history calls it *war*. When they forced them to pay millions of dollars for the trouble they had in killing them, history calls it *indemnification for the expenses of the war*. When President Polk wanted to possess himself of the then Mexican territory of Upper California, he sent Gen. Taylor, with an army of occupation, into disputed Mexican Territory, well knowing that an honorable nation would be obliged to resent it as an insult, and that would be considered a *casus belli* and afford a pretext for making war upon the weak nation, and possessing ourselves of the coveted territory; history calls it *conquest and reprisals*. It is true that we acted more honorably than Great Britain, in awarding some compensation. President Buchanan, goaded by the Republicans, wished to show them that in regard to the Mormons he dared out-Herod Herod, by fitting up an army to make war upon the Mormons; but it was necessary to have a pretext. It would not have been popular to destroy a whole community in cold blood, so he sent out a few miserable minions and renegades for the purpose of provoking a collision. These men not only acted infamously here but published false statements throughout the United States, and every kind of infamy,—as is now being done by just such characters,—was laid at the door of the Mormons. They said among other things, that we had burned the U. S. records. These statements were afterwards denied by Governor Cummings. Mr. Buchanan had another object in view, and Mr. J. B. Floyd, Secretary of War, had also his ax to grind, and the whole combined was considered a *grand coup d'état*. It is hardly necessary to inform Mr. Colfax that this army, under pretence of subjugating the Mormons, was

intended to coerce the people of Kansas to his views, and that they were not detained, as stated by Mr. Colfax's history which said "the troops necessarily moving slowly were overtaken by the snows in November and wintered at Bridger." I need not inform Mr. Colfax that another part of this grand tableau originated in the desire of Secretary Floyd to scatter the U. S. forces and arms, preparatory to the Confederate rebellion. Such is history and such are facts.

We were well informed as to the object of the coming of the army, we had men in all of the camps, and knew what was intended. There was a continual beat among the men and officers, even before they left the Missouri river, of what they would do with the Mormons. The houses were picked out that certain persons were to inhabit; farms, property and women were to be distributed. "Beauty and booty," were their watchword. We were to have another grand Norman conquest, and our houses, gardens, orchards, vineyards, fields, wives and daughters were to be the spoils. Instead of this Mr. Buchanan kept them too long about Kansas; the Lord put a hook in their jaws, and instead of revelling in sacked towns and cities and glutting their libidinous and riotous desires in ravishing, destroying and laying waste, they knawed dead mules' legs at Bridger, rendered palatable by the ice, frost and snow of a mountain winter, seasoned by the pestiferous exhalations of hecatombs of dead animals, the debris of a ruined army, at a cost to the nation of about forty millions. We had reason to say then "The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad." Oh, how wicked it was for President Young to resist an army like the above, prostituted by the guardians of a free and enlightened Republic to the capacity of buccaners and brigands!

In the spring rumors prevailed of an intended advance of the army. Preferring compromise to conflict, we left Salt Lake City and the northern part of the Territory *en masse* and prepared ourselves, for what we then considered, a coming conflict. After first preparing combustible materials and leaving a sufficient number of men in every settlement to destroy everything; had we been driven to it we should have made such a conflagration as never was witnessed in the U. S. Every house would have been burned and leveled to the ground, every barn, grain and hay stack, every meeting house, court house and store demolished; every fruit tree and shrub would have been cut down; every fence burned and the country would have been left a howling wilderness as we found it. We were determined that if we could not enjoy our homes in peace, that never again should our enemies revel in our possessions.

I now come to Mr. Colfax's next heading

"THEIR POLYGAMY."

As this is simply a rehash of his former arguments, without answering mine,

I beg to be excused inserting his very lengthy quotation as this article is already long. In regard to our toleration of all religions," Mr. C. entertains very singular ideas. We do invite men of almost all persuasions to preach to us in our tabernacles, but we are not so latitudinarian in our principles as to furnish meetinghouses for all; we never considered this a part of the programme. Meeting houses are generally closed against us everywhere, and men are advised not to go and hear us; we open ours, and say to our congregations go and hear them, but we do not engage to furnish all. Neither is the following statement correct. "About the same time he (Mr. Taylor) was writing it, Godbe and others were being expelled from the church for disbelieving the infallibility of Brigham Young." No person, as I before stated, was ever expelled from the church for doubting the infallibility of President Young; it is but just to say that President Young, himself disclaims it. Mr. C. again repeats his argument in relation to the suttee, or burning of widows in India, and after giving a very elaborate and correct account of its suppression by English authority says:—

"Wherever English power is recognized there this so-called religious rite is now sternly forbidden and prevented. England with united voice said 'stop' and India obeyed."

To present Mr. Colfax's argument fairly, it stands thus: The burning of Hindoo widows was considered a religious rite, by the Hindoos. The British were horrified at the practice, and suppressed it. The Mormons believe polygamy to be a religious rite. The American nation consider it a scandal and that they ought to put it down. Without entering into all the details, I think the above a fair statement of the question. He says "the claim that religious faith commanded it was powerless, and it went down, as a relic of barbarism. He says: "History tells us what a civilized nation, akin to ours, actually did, where they had the power." I wish to treat this argument with candor, although I do not look upon the British nation as a fit example for us; it was not so thought in the time of the Revolution. I hope we would not follow them in charging their cannon with Sepoys, and shooting them off, in this same India. I am glad, also, to find that our Administration views and acts upon the question of neutrality more honorably than our trans-atlantic cousins. But to the point. The British suppressed the suttee in India, and therefore we must be equally moral and suppress polygamy in the United States. Hold! not so fast; let us state facts as they are and remove the dust. The British suppressed the suttee, but tolerated eighty-three millions of polygamists in India. The suppression of the suttee and that of polygamy are two very different things. If the British are indeed to be our exemplars, Congress had better wait until polygamy is suppressed in India. But it

is absurd to compare the suttee to polygamy; one is murder and the destruction of life, the other is national economy and the increase and perpetuation of life. *Suttee* ranks truly with *infanticide*, both of which are destructive of human life. *Polygamy* is salvation compared with either, and tends even more than monogamy to increase and perpetuate the human race.

I have now waded through Mr. Colfax's charges and have proven the falsity of his assertions and the tergiversation of his historical data. I will not say his, but his adopted history; for it is but fair to say that he disclaims vouching for its accuracy.

Permit me here again to assert my right as a public teacher, to address myself to Congress and the nation, and to call their attention to something that is more demoralizing, debasing, and destructive than polygamy. As an offset to my former remarks on these things, we are referred to our mortality of infants as "exceeding any thing else known."

Mr. Colfax is certainly in error here. In France, according to late statistical reports on *la mort d'enfants*, they were rated at from fifty to eighty per cent of the whole, under one year old. The following is from the Salt Lake City sexton's report for 1869:

"Total interments during the year,	484
Deducting persons brought from the country places for interment and transients,	93

Leaving the mortality of this city, 391
 JOS. E. TAYLOR, Sexton.

"Having been often asked the question: Whether the death-rate was not considerably greater among polygamic families than monogamic, I will answer: Of the 292 children buried from Salt Lake City last year (1869), 64 were children of polygamists; while 228 were children of monogamists; and further, that out of this number, there was not even one case of infanticide.

Respectfully,
 JOS. E. TAYLOR."

We had a sickly season last year among children; but when it is considered that we have twice as many children as any other place, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, the death-rate is very low, especially among polygamists.

But supposing it was true, "the *argumentum ad hominum*," which Mr. Colfax says he "might use," would scarcely be an *argumentum ad judicium*; for if all the children in Salt Lake City or Utah died, it would certainly not do away with that horrible crime, infanticide. Would Mr. Colfax say that because a great number of children in Utah, who were children of polygamists, died, that, therefore, infanticide in the United States is justifiable? and that the acts of Madame Restelle and her pupils were right and proper? I know he would not, his ideas are more pure, generous and exalted. Mr. Colfax says of us, "I do not charge infant murder, of course." Now I

do charge that infant murder prevails to an alarming extent in the United States. The following will show how near right I am. Extract from a book, entitled, *Serpents in a Dove's Nest*, by Rev. John Todd, D. D., Boston. Lee and Shepherd.

Under the head of "Fashionable Murder," we read the following:

"By the advertisements of almost every paper, city and village in the land, offering medicines to be effectual "from whatever causes" it is needed; by the shameless and notorious great establishments, fitted up and advertised as places where any woman may resort to effect the end desired, and which now number in the city of New York alone over four hundred, advertised and *abundantly patronized*, houses devoted to the work of abortifacienting; by the confessions of hundreds of women made to physicians, who have been injured by the process; and by the almost constant and unblushing applications made to the profession from 'women in all classes of society, *married and unmarried, rich and poor* and otherwise, good, bad or indifferent,' to aid them in the thing—do we know of the frequency of this crime?" P. 4 and 5. "I would not advise anyone to challenge further disclosures, else we can show that France, with all her atheism, that Paris, with all her license, is not as guilty, in this respect, as is staid New England at the present hour. Facts can be adduced that will make the ears tingle; but we don't want to divulge them; but we do want the womanhood of our day to understand that the thing can be no longer concealed; that commonness or fashion cannot do away with its awful guilt; it is deliberate and cold-blooded murder." P. 13 and 14.

These facts are corroborated by Dr. Story in a book, entitled, *Why Not*. Lee and Shepherd, Boston. By the *New York Medical Journal*, September, 1866, by the *Boston Commonwealth*, Springfield (Mass.) *Worster Palladium*, Northampton *Free Press*, Salem *Observer* and, as stated above "by the advertisements of almost every paper, city and village in the land." I have statistics before me now, from a physician, stating the amount of prostitution, feticide and infanticide in Chicago; but bad as Chicago is represented to be, these statements are so enormous and revolting that I cannot believe them. Neither is the statement made by some of the papers, in regard to Mr. Colfax's association with the Richardson case, reliable. Men in his position have their enemies, and it is not credible that a gentleman holding such strong prejudice about, what he considers, the immorality of the "Mormons," and whose moral ideas, in relation to virtue and chastity, are so pure, could lend himself as an accomplice to the very worst and most revolting phase of Free Loveism. And I would here solicit the aid of Mr. Colfax, with his superior intelligence, his brilliant talents and honorable position, to help stop the blighting, withering curse of prostitution, feticide and infanticide.

I call upon philosophers and philanthropists to stop it; know ye not that the transgression of every law of nature brings its own punishment, and that as noble a race of men as ever existed on the earth are becoming emasculated and destroyed by it? I call upon physicians to stop it; you are the guardians of the people's health, and justice requires that you should use all your endeavors to stop the demoralization and destruction of our race. I call upon ministers of the gospel to stop it; know ye not the wail of murdered infants is ascending into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth and that the whole nation is hastening to destruction whilst you are singing lullaby songs to murderers and murderers? I call upon statesmen to stop it; know ye not that the statisticians inform us that our original stock is running out, and that in consequence of this crime we are being supplanted by foreigners, and that the enemies of the negro race are already exulting in the hope of their speedy extinction, by copying your vices. I call upon the fair daughters of America and their abettors their husbands and paramours to pause in their career of crime; you came of an honorable and pure stock, your fathers, mothers and grandmothers' hands were not stained with the blood of innocence; they could press their pillows in peace, without the fear of a visit from the shades of their wailing offspring. I call upon municipal and State authorities and especially upon Congress to stop this withering, cursing and damning blight. I call upon all honorable men and women to use their influence to stop this growing evil. I conjure you by the love of God, by the ties of consanguinity, by a respect for our race and a love for our nation, by the moans of murdered infants and the fear of an avenging retribution, help stop this cursed evil!

In the province of Gazaret, Hindostan, parents have been in the habit of destroying infant children as soon as born; and at the festival held at Gunga Sergoor, children were sacrificed to the Ganges from time immemorial; both of these the British nation suppressed. Shall we practice crimes in civilized and Christian America, that England will not allow heathens to perform, but put them down by the strong arm of the law? You indeed tell us that these things are "banned by you, banned by the law, banned by morality and public opinion;" your bans are but a mockery and a fraud, as are your New England temperance laws; your law reaches one in a thousand who is so unfortunate as to be publicly exposed. These crimes, of which I write, run riot in the land, a withering, cursing blight. The affected purity of the nation is a myth; like the whited walls and painted sepulchers, of which Jesus spake, "within there is nothing but rottenness and dead men's bones." Who, and what is banned by you? What power is there in your interdiction over the thirty thousand prostitutes and mistresses of New York and their amiable pimps and paramours? What of the

thousands in the city of brotherly love, in Boston, in your large eastern, northern and southern cities? What of Washington? What of your four hundred murder establishments in New York and your New England operations in the same line? You are *virtuous* are you? God deliver us from such virtue. It may be well to talk about your purity and bans to those who are ignorant; it is too bare-faced for the informed. I say, as I said before, why don't you stop this damning, cursed evil? I am reminded of the Shakesperian spouter who cried, "I can call spirits from the vasty deep!" "So can I," said his hearer, "but they wont come!" Now we do control these horrid vices and crimes, do you want to force them upon us? Such things are

"A blot that will remain a blot in spite,
Of all that grave apologists may write;
And though a bishop try to cleanse the stain,
He rubs and scours, the crimson spot in vain."

We have now a Territory out of debt; our cities, counties and towns are out of debt. We have no gambling, no drunkenness, no prostitution, feticide nor infanticide. We maintain our wives and children, and we have made the "desert to blossom as the rose." We are at peace with ourselves, and with all the world. Whom have we injured? Why can we not be let alone?

What are we offered by you in your proposed legislation? for it is well for us to count the cost. First—confiscation of property, our lands, houses, gardens, fields, vineyards, and orchards, legislated away by men who have no property, carpetbaggers,

pettifoggers, adventurers, robbers, for you offer by your bills, a premium for fraud and robbery. The first robs us of our property and leaves us the privilege, though despoiled, of retaining our honor, and of worshipping God according to the dictates of our own conscience. We have been robbed before; this we could stand again. Now for the second,—the great privilege which you offer by *obedience*: Loss of honor and self respect; a renunciation of God and our religion; the prostitution of our wives and children to a level with your civilization; to be cursed with your debauchery; to be forced to countenance infanticide in our midst, and have your professional artists advertise their dens of murder among us; to swarm, as you do, with pimps and harlots and their paramours; to have gambling, drunkenness, whoredom, and all the pestiferous effects of debauchery; to be involved in debt and crime, forced upon us; to despise ourselves, to be despised by our wives, children and friends, and to be despised and cursed of God, in time and in eternity. This you offer us and your religion to boot. It is true you tell us you will "ban it" but your bans are a myth; you would open the flood gates of crime and debauchery, infanticide, drunkenness and gambling, and practically tie them up with a strand of a spider's web. You cannot stop these; if you would you have not the power. We have, and prefer purity, honor, and a clear conscience, and our motto to-day is, as it ever has been, and I hope ever will be "the Kingdom of God or nothing."

Respectfully,
JOHN TAYLOR.



